

## Language Selection to Attract Customers' Attention: Verbal Branding and Representation of Specific Ethnicity

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### ABSTRACT

Words can motivate individuals to take action. In culinary sector, distinct ethnic verbal branding is one of the techniques to identify a restaurant brand. Specific phrases or words are selected to establish a powerful brand. This study aims to analyze the language selection for verbal branding and ethnicity representation in restaurants that use ethnic brands in Pekanbaru, one of the metropolis cities with the largest economic activities in Sumatera Island. Six restaurants were selected for their popular atmosphere, service, and cuisines authenticity specific to ethnic brand. This qualitative research was conducted from the perspective of cultural studies using an ethnolinguistic approach to collect data from three-month observations and interviews with the owners of purposively-selected restaurant to help understand the phenomenon. The results indicated that, lexically, the names of the restaurants contained ethnic words directly associated with certain ethnicities and are chosen to create a memorable brand. The analysis of associative meaning reveals that the restaurant brand represents an ethnicity with its uniqueness to produce strong branding which attracts customers. The combined lexical and associative meaning shows that restaurant branding represents not only the restaurant owners' place of origin or ethnicity but also the authentic menus that define their culinary business. Research implications suggest the effectiveness of incorporating local words and ethnic representation in the restaurants' names to bring in economic benefits and international branding.

### 1. Introduction

There has been an emerging trend of eating for pleasure instead of survival among many people in developing countries (Kwon, 2015) and urban society in big cities. Over and above meeting physiological needs, food is related to social interaction and psychological expression (Conner & Armitage, 2006). Food is not simply an object to be consumed, it can even be an agent of social change (Karaosmanoğlu, 2020). These phenomena have motivated restaurant owners to create ethnic branding to attract more cross-ethnic customers. Culinary industry in big cities has increased awareness of this shifting trend of eating as entertainment, and therefore introduced the respective ethnic cuisine to these customer segments. Ethnic restaurants are perceived as ones that offer their customers the experience to taste local cuisine or ethnic food specific to a country or region, in an ambience made similar to the original place (Marinkovic et al., 2015). According to Kwon (2015), ethnic food is the

authentic food from one ethnic group or area that is culturally and socially acceptable to people outside the ethnic group. Chen et al. (2021) mention that as the ethnic restaurant industry expands, effective marketing methods to attract customers in today's competitive market are critical. Baker & Kim (2018a) mention that customer communication encompasses not only what is said but also the language selection and body language that supports the message. Despite the growing popularity of ethnic restaurants in recent years, attracting customers from other ethnic groups has been the fundamental challenge to expanding the ethnic restaurant enterprises (Zhang & Hanks, 2018).

As the capital city of Riau Province, Pekanbaru is one of enormous centres of economy and trade and services in Sumatra island with a high rate of migration and urbanisation growth. Pekanbaru is selected for research because it is currently developing into a multi-ethnic trading city where various ethnic groups seize this opportunity to seek fortune in different ways that

include opening restaurants. Some restaurants in Pekanbaru are famous for their ethnic culinary to attract customers to taste food from different places. This trend of ethnic restaurant industry seems promising due to the growing migration and demography (Kwon et al., 2010).

Ryu & Zhong (2012) convey that the consumers of ethnic restaurants prefer experiencing different cultures and are eager to try new dishes. The owners of ethnic restaurants must build consumer trust, which involves three important stages in food preparation from preparation to presentation and consumption (Youn & Kim, 2017) and consider verbal branding potential when giving names to their ethnic restaurants in order to engage their customers. As reported by previous study, brand image, which is defined as the consumer's cognitive or emotional view of individual brands, is the most extensively researched dimension in business (Rodríguez-López et al., 2020).

Therefore, naming a restaurant is the most important part of building a food brand. Brands must include their name, logo, design, and other symbols to convey the essence and uniqueness of the product they are representing (Susanto, 2015). Naming not only exhibits the identity of a place but also specifies the importance of displaying the characteristics or variety of the food industry. The name of a restaurant may infer certain ethnic groups that characterise and identify food served in the industry. Also, naming is a process of using the earliest language as a language tradition. As mentioned by Fitriisia et al. (2018), there are two kinds of naming processes: common meaning and proper meaning. While common meaning is the process of naming common objects and thus forming common nouns, proper naming is the process of self-naming to form nounself (proper nouns). In this research, proper naming is more related to cultural studies particularly the culinary industry which allows potential customers to acknowledge which restaurant to go to get their choice of food. Language selection for a brand name transcends literal meaning - it encompasses specific culture.

Therefore, bridging language and culture in the process of naming takes a linguistic science related to culture, namely ethnolinguistics. In compliance with Abdullah (2013), ethnolinguistics is a linguistic science that focuses on language dimensions, such as social and cultural. Fishman (2017) expresses that ethnolinguistics can be interpreted as one of several established studies of language ecology. Here Fishman mentions that ethnolinguistics dissects and sorts out the utilisation of language, ways and patterns of thought in terms of patterns of language use, ritual languages, and discourse creation. Abdullah (2013) enunciates that the most important orientation in ethnolinguistic studies needs an understanding of lexical semantics. In doing so, the choice of brand name implicates the selection of language applied in the name itself. Surprisingly, only little research has investigated the language

selection for verbal branding, especially for ethnic restaurants that apply an ethnolinguistic approach.

Given the call for more research to examine the importance of this topic, this study aims to analyse language selection for verbal branding and representation of ethnicity in restaurants that employ ethnic brands in Pekanbaru. As attested by the perspective of cultural studies using an ethnolinguistic approach in three-month observation and in-depth interviews with each restaurant owner, this study offers important contributions to current business practices for restaurant branding. This study contribute to the reduction of gaps in the current literature, which may add to the body of knowledge on restaurant branding with ethnic names, especially for language selection areas that involve a linguistic element. Restaurants selected for this study have specific ethnic names that represent the corresponding ethnic groups, namely *Kimteng* for Chinese ethnicity, *Sultan Resto* for Riau-Coastal Malay ethnicity, *Pondok Patin* for Riau-Mainland Malay ethnicity, *Bare Solok* for Minangkabau ethnicity, *Pemuda Semarang* for Javanese ethnicity, and *Koki Sunda* for Sundanese ethnicity. Therefore, incorporating semantic approach in revealing ethnic identity is appropriate in researching the naming process in the culinary industry in Pekanbaru.

The next contribution offered in this study is that other restaurant owners allow to implement this discovery as new insight into developing not only marketing strategies using language but also to understand beyond meaning and symbol in the selected ethnicity. Therefore, this study may explain the language selection can be applied in culinary service to attract attention of the customer in positive ways based-knowledge from specific ethnic.

## 2. Literature Review

Language is the earliest cultural product created by humans. In congruent with Keraf (2004), when reviewed from the history of language development up until the present day, the function of language can be derived from the growth motive of the language itself which may include language functions to express meaning as well as a tool for communication, social integration and adaptation, and social control.

Therefore, language was born in a variety of forms while representing the ethnicity in which the language grows. Kridalaksana (2008) notes that language variety is a variation of language depending on usage, which varies according to the relationship between the speakers, the interlocutors, the persons being spoken of, and the medium of speaking. Based on meaning, there are two types of language variety: spoken language and written language. Spoken language is the way people communicate through speech or spoken words. It is the primary means of communication for most people and is frequently implemented in face-to-face interactions,

telephone conversations, and other forms of verbal communication. Meanwhile, written language is usually more formal and structured than spoken language and tends to be more standardised and uniform across cultures and regions. Both spoken and written language are important tools for communication and play a central role in our daily lives. They enable us to convey information, express our thoughts and feelings, and interact with others in various contexts.

Language as a means of communication facilitates shared communications and mutual understanding between people of different cultures despite differences in language and customs. More specifically in food industry, language can play a role in ethnic identification by helping identify and categorise foods associated with certain ethnicities.

Verbal branding alludes to using language to create and strengthen brand identity, image, and reputation. This involves developing a unique and consistent voice and tone for a brand and using specific words and phrases that reflect the brand's values and personality. Effective verbal branding requires careful planning and consideration of the brand's target audience, as well as brand's positioning and value proposition. Creating a consistent verbal identity that aligns with the brand strategy and resonates with the target audience is noteworthy.

In the context of this point, the researcher examined the variety of written language in ethnic branding. Between language and culture, the naming process needs to be bridged with linguistics related to culture. Wardhaugh & Fuller (2021) explain that language and ethnography are interrelated. Ethnography describes the social structure, community activities, and material and symbolic sources that describe the conditions of a particular society. Meanwhile, language is an important source to observe, especially the way it is implemented in social activities, religion, songs, and others. This is the background for the emergence of ethnolinguistic studies. The ethnolinguistic research on ethnic restaurants highlights the important role of language and culture in shaping ethnic dining experience and the way ethnic restaurants serve as the sites for language learning and cultural exchange.

Language help people express what they mean to say or do. In linguistics, the study of meaning is called semantics. Palmer (2008) states that semantics is derived from Greek language which means to signify. Verhaar (2001) adds that semantics is a branch of linguistics that discusses meaning or the relationship between linguistic forms and entities in the world. Furthermore, regarding language and meaning, especially the lexical approach and associative meaning, Cruse (1986) expounds that the contextual approach assumes that the suitability of relationship with the context fully reflects the semantic characteristics or "identity" of the lexical element.

Chaer & Muliastuti (2009) mention different types of meaning: lexical, grammatical, contextual, referential, non-referential, denotative, connotative, conceptual, associative, and words terms, idioms, and the meaning proverbs. In analysing the naming of ethnic restaurants in Pekanbaru, the researcher would take two types of meaning:

- 1) Lexical meaning: the meaning of the base (such as the word *research*) in a paradigm, apart from any meaning it may obtain as part of a sentence (such as *researched, researching*).
- 2) Associative meaning: the meaning that a lexeme or word has regarding the relationship between the word and aspects outside of language.

A crucial component of marketing for any company, particularly an ethnic restaurant, is verbal branding. Using descriptive words and language, verbal branding develops a distinctive and enduring brand identity that connects with customers. Verbal branding in the context of ethnic restaurant may include employing language and terminology unique to the restaurant's culture or cuisine as well as incorporating cultural characteristics into branding and marketing materials.

Numerous studies have been performed on verbal branding for the ethnic culinary industry. In one research, ethnic restaurants may make their patrons grasp more authenticity and connection with their culture by using culturally distinct language in their branding. This can be especially enticing to people looking for authentic ethnic food. Another study reported that using cultural-specific language and imagery for restaurant branding may contribute to creating a sense of belonging to a place and cultural identity, which is a key element in luring and keeping consumers. A previous research relevant to this study was conducted by Santosa (2020) who explored the naming of coffee shops in Surabaya which engaged the themes of feeling, and performed a semantic study through interviews with the owners to understand the motives and concepts of the coffee shop.

In addition, Rahayu et al. (2019) examined the naming of tourist attractions in Karanganyar Regency using semantic studies and linking them to the historical values of the surrounding area using interviews. It was found that the naming conveyed a relationship between language and culture of people in Karanganyar. A study by Erkmen & Hancer (2019) entitled "An Examination of other customers, brand image, trust, and restaurant attributes" examined the role of other customers to explain the relation with a brand. Applying quantitative research using structural equation modelling, the findings supported the sequential link for restaurants, namely experience attributes, brand relationship, and brand preference. While all restaurant attributes except other customers explain customers' satisfaction, service quality and other customers played a significant role in forming the brand image in the minds of restaurant customers.

These studies reveal that verbal branding is a powerful tool for creating a unique and memorable brand identity in the ethnic restaurant industry.

### 3. Method

This research was conducted within the framework of analysing the meaning of lexical semantics in the concept of culture. Theoretically, it used ethnolinguistic approach with a qualitative descriptive analysis. The location of this research is the culinary industry in Pekanbaru, as the capital cities of Sumatera Island. The researcher conducted three-month observations and in-depth interviews to gather the data.

Six restaurants in Pekanbaru city were purposively sampled as the object of this research based on their names which conveyed ethnic food branding and their popularity in Pekanbaru. These restaurants also represent the dominant ethnic groups in Pekanbaru in which ethnic restaurant is an emerging trend. Kimteng represents Chinese ethnicity, Pemuda Semarang represents Javanese, Bare Solok represents Minangkabau, Sultan Resto represents Riau-Coastal Malay, Pondok Patin represents Riau-Mainland Malay, and Koki Sunda represents Sundanese ethnicity.

The researcher interviewed the restaurant owners or senior employees who have worked at the restaurant for more than five years. Interviews were recorded to acquire candid responses. The informants were allowed to review the accuracy of their answers. Data from the interviews and observations were grouped based on the ethnic naming, which was the focus of this study. Furthermore, the data is described and analysed to get the lexical semantic meaning of the naming by Chaer (1999)'s theory. After that, the researcher drew conclusions by virtue of the results of the study.

### 4. Results and Discussion

This study examines the language selection in the naming process of the culinary industry in Pekanbaru in conformity with the existing ethnic naming by glancing at the lexical and associative meaning as initiated by Chaer (1990). The following section elaborate the ethnic food and cultural representation of each restaurant.

#### 4.1 Pondok Patin

Pondok Patin is one of the restaurants in Pekanbaru City which carries the ethnic name from Riau-Mainland Malay. Run in a modern management, Pondok Patin is the provider of traditional food with good quality and excellent services to consumers (Doni, 2016). This restaurant has the slogan "You have not been to Pekanbaru unless you visit Pondok Patin," which means tourists should visit this well-known restaurant for its mainstay menu of *patin* (catfish). Pondok Patin consists of two meaningful words. First, the word "Pondok" according to The Great Indonesian Dictionary V (KBI V) carries four meaning:

- 1) n. buildings for temporary places (such as those built in the fields, in forests); *teratak*: at the edge of the forest that was about to be cleared was set up several fruits
- 2) n. house (a derogatory term): if you do not mind, please stop by for a moment at – my house.
- 3) n. a residential building with tiled walls and thatched roofs (for several families to live in).
- 4) n. madrasas and dormitories (places to recite the Al-Qur'an and study Islam): in that area, several are managed in modern.

In this context, "Pondok" refers to points 1 and 2. The lexical meaning in point 1. n is certainly about identity, referring to an object built on a piece of land. Meanwhile, point 2 refers to the lexical and philosophical meaning of a house or culinary brand that one wants to build. In an associative sense, "pondok" is a remarkable place, rich in traditional elements that give modest and humble impression. Pondok Patin restaurant is designed with a concept of a rural Malay house, namely a wooden stilt house that gives out simple but exquisite impression. As a simple and unpretentious place, Pondok Patin has become the main attraction for its customers.

Second, "patin" or catfish, is a species of fish associated with Kampar River and Kampar-Malay ethnicity. Kampar is one of the regencies in Riau province where catfish is a leading national commodity and has become an icon of the district (Nurman et al., 2019). Interviews with the owner of Pondok Patin revealed that "patin" is selected as the restaurant's name to provide a distinctive brand to attract customers. Accordingly, potential buyers of Pondok Patin restaurant would instantly know that this restaurant provides typical menus of river cuisine from Kampar. A variety of traditional dishes from Kampar Malay includes sour spicy *baung* (tropical catfish), *salai* fish (smoked fish), *pantau* fish, and giant prawns strengthen the identity of this restaurant. Therefore, when combined, "Pondok Patin" represents Kampar culture as part of Riau-Mainland Malay.

From the explanation above, restaurant owners would persistently attempt to create a distinct impression of their restaurant. On top of naming restaurants with unique ethnic-associated words that highlight regional characteristics, restaurant owners need to create a restaurant atmosphere that is no less interesting. Pondok Patin has accomplished this cultural representation by selecting the words Pondok and Patin as the restaurant brand. Additionally, interesting experiences, delicious special food, friendly service, and a comfortable place give a positive impression on each customer (Megawati, 2012). One of the unique element of Pondok Patin is the food presentation. Instead of asking customers to order from the menu, the waiters bring all food and dishes listed in the menus to the customers' table so that they can taste all of them.

Kim and Jang (2019) mention that affluent millennials, access to worldwide travel, ethnic variety, cultural experience, and more media exposure have contributed to the rise in demand for ethnic cuisine. As a result, from year to year, Pondok Patin always attract visitors and even survive competition from other culinary businesses, such as cafes and restaurants that offer the same culinary specialities (Sari & Hendri, 2020).

## 4.2 Sultan Resto

Sultan Resto is a restaurant that has strong Malay elements. Customers can enjoy the atmosphere of a dining area with accurate Malay touch. To enhance the restaurant's appearance, Sultan Resto has a room designed mostly with wooden interior. Every corner displays old photographs of historic Pekanbaru city. Apart from the unique concept of the room, a unique ritual is usually carried out. Before customers enjoy their meal, the waiters at the Sultan Resto will read some Malay rhymes as an opening.

For branding purposes, the name Sultan Resto consists of two words. "Sultan" means king, and "Resto" is the short for restaurants. According to The Great Indonesian Dictionary V (KBBI V), *sul. tan* is a noun which means king or His Majesty, for example Sultan Yogya and Sultan Johor. Lexically, "Sultan" denotes the highest position of a social structure as the king. Sultan may be selected to reflect the cultural heritage of Malay region and historical importance of the area, especially Siak. Alternatively, Sultan can convey luxury to denote an upscale dining experience although the researcher's observation found that Malay specialities in Sultan Resto are relatively affordable.

In associative meaning, the word "Sultan" in Riau Malay culture certainly signifies Siak Sultanate, which is the basis of the existing Riau Malay culture and the establishment of Riau province. For this reason, it is certainly not surprising that Siak Sultanate has become part of cultural identity for Riau province. The results of interviews with the owners and employees of the Sultan Resto further strengthen this. Culinary industry are apparently eager to represent the cultural heritage of Siak Sultanate in their restaurant building and menu.

The culinary industry is trying to revive the traditions that once existed in the Siak Sultanate by designing the restaurant in authentic Malay design and serving the customers with authentic Malay cuisine. Regardless of specific reasons behind the name of Sultan Resto, branding and marketing efforts need to align with the restaurant's name and identity. This can involve using culturally specific language and imagery in marketing materials and highlighting the unique aspects of the culture and cuisine that the restaurant represents. In this way, the lexical meaning found is in line with the ethnic and cultural concepts carried out and becomes the mission of the culinary industry.

To conclude, restaurant owners can use their unique ways to market their products so that consumers are able to feel the emotional side of the products offered. This could be the beginning of a branding success in marketing products or food at the Sultan Resto restaurant. It is important to consider a restaurant's name carefully, as it can significantly impact a business's overall branding and marketing efforts. When choosing a name for an ethnic restaurant, it is important to consider the culture and cuisine that the restaurant represents, as well as the target customer and overall business goals.

## 4.3 Kimteng

The name Kimteng is associated with Chinese ethnic background. It is a coffee shop that serves coffee and other beverages, as well as food from a specific ethnic group in China. Chinese ethnic coffee shops often focus on displaying the culture and serving a variety of cuisine of a particular ethnic group in China. Chinese ethnic coffee shops may offer a range of cultural experiences, such as music and dance performances or classes and workshops on traditional crafts and skills. In China, the appeal of many international and ethnic cuisines has been promoted through increased globalisation, international trade, foreign investments and outbound tourism (Wang et al., 2016).

The name Kimteng is derived from the founder's name. Lexically, "Kim" is the surname and "Teng" is the last name or given name. In proportion to the arrangement of writing Chinese names, the surname is written in first then followed by the nickname. In associative meaning, Kimteng is not simply the name of the founder. Over time, Kimteng has transformed into a particularly strong image and brand, building on its specific characteristics. This is evident from the results of interviews with the manager of Kimteng. Pursuant to its history, Kimteng has undergone several change. It was started with Yu Hun Coffee Shop which Kimteng co-managed with his brother, then changed to Kedai Kopi Nirmala, and again to Kedai Kopi Segar which became its official name. However, the name Kedai Kopi Segar is unpopular.

The failure of the name suggests that linguistic branding may take numerous shapes, including the language used in marketing and advertising materials, the tone and style of communication, and the words and phrases to describe the brand and its products or services. For the local community, the mention of Kimteng Coffee Shop is more familiar because it contains the owner's name. Finally, Kimteng is succeeded by Kim Teng's grandson, Mulyadi, who officially established Kimteng as the coffee shop's name because Kimteng has been closely associated with the coffee shop and it is a way to remember his grandfather's struggle to establish and build the coffee shop.

#### 4.4 Bare Solok

“Bareh” is a word derived from Minang language. Factually, “bareh” denotes “rice” in Indonesian. In relation to the lexical meaning in the Great Indonesian Dictionary, “rice” is a noun word which means either rice that has been peeled off (which becomes rice after being cooked), or grains (such as corn, coffee). Meanwhile, “Solok” is a noun word which means a valley between two mountains, a city in West Sumatra Province where rice is produced, or a district in West Sumatra Province, whose capital is Arosuka. Therefore, on the authority of the lexical meaning, it has been emphasised that the naming of Bare Solok restaurant is faithful to the concept of rice (food) originated from Solok.

In associative meaning, Solok area adverts to the names of districts and cities within the province of West Sumatra. Solok region produces the best quality of rice in West Sumatra, which is well known outside of West Sumatra. Rice as the main raw ingredient of restaurant industry is indisputably the most important factor. In some cultures, rice is perceived as a symbol of prosperity and abundance (Wijaya, 2019). For example, in parts of Asia, it is common to throw rice at weddings as a way of wishing the newlyweds a prosperous life together (Wijaya, 2019). This indicates that using the best raw ingredients may produce the best cuisine. This statement was reinforced by the owner of the Bare Solok culinary industry when interviewed. Furthermore, language can be used to communicate information about the food production process, such as the ingredients and how to cook it, which may be related to certain ethnic traditions. This choice of language allows assisting in promoting ethnic food, for example, by employing terms in the language the food is from or by a language that can be translated into other languages to attract consumers from various ethnic backgrounds.

#### 4.5 Pemuda Semarang

Pemuda Semarang restaurant combines the word “Pemuda” with “Semarang”. “Pemuda” is the Indonesian translation of an English word “young”. According to The Great Indonesian Dictionary V (KBBI V), “pemuda” connotes with people who are still young, young people, cadets, -- the hope of the nation. Semarang lexically alludes to the capital city of Central Java Province, a city known for its diverse culinary delights, with a wide selection of local and international dishes available.

The term “pemuda” in associative denotes “youth” conveys energy, enthusiasm, and a sense of optimism about the future. This term can be associated with physical vitality and mental agility. Associatively, Pemuda Semarang restaurant may be established or owned by young people in Semarang. However, based upon the interview with informants from the restaurant, the naming of Pemuda Semarang refers to the owner of

the chilli recipe at the restaurant from Semarang the first time. Meanwhile, the owner of Pemuda Semarang restaurant is from Palembang in Sumatra Island instead of Semarang in Java Island. This information conveys the associative meaning that Pemuda Semarang was not necessarily established by young people in Semarang but they still serve menu which is specific to Javanese cuisine. With this regard, selecting language elements to serve as the branding of an ethnic restaurant should align with the brand personality and values. Baker & Kim (2018a) assert that the approach of spelling or pronouncing a brand name in a foreign language, in harmony with branding literature, may act as a key cue that sparks connections with certain origins.

#### 4.6 Koki Sunda

The term for “Koki” and “Sunda” carries its own meaning in The Great Indonesian Dictionary V (KBBI V). “Koki” is a noun word which means a chef or an expert in culinary arts. “Sunda” is also a noun word which refers to an ethnic group that inhabits the area of West Java, or the language spoken by the Sundanese. Combined, the lexical meaning of “Koki Sunda” is a cook who comes from the Sundanese ethnicity. As reported by an interview with one of the employees in Koki Sunda, the name of Koki Sunda has accurately elicited that the chef of this restaurant is from Sunda. In Sundanese language spoken in West Java, the term “Koki” refers to a type of food made by mixing rice with other ingredients, such as vegetables, meat, or seafood, then wrapping the mixture in banana leaves and cooking over the fire or on the stove.

Likewise, in associative meaning, if the cook is from Sunda, the dishes are Sundanese dishes. When traced directly to the culinary industry, the menu served in Koki Sunda is typical Sundanese cuisine, from fresh vegetables to tamarind soup. Sundanese cuisine is known for the use of various herbs and spices, as well fresh, local ingredients. Some popular dishes from Sundanese cuisine include *sate maranggi* (grilled satay), *nasi timbel* (rice wrapped in banana leaves), and *lalapan* (fresh vegetables served with spicy sauce). Associatively, the Sundanese ethnicity is amid the dominant Malay ethnicity in Pekanbaru. As specified by Baker & Kim (2018b), an ethnic restaurant should concentrate on the distinctive components that convey its ethnic identity through language selection on the menu as well. Overall, the language selection plays an important role in promoting and introducing ethnic foods to consumers and reinforcing the culture and traditions associated with these foods.

## 4. Conclusions

This study examines language selection for verbal branding and ethnic representation in restaurants that utilise ethnic brands in Pekanbaru, one of Sumatra Island's major cities. The analysis reveals that the names of six culinary industry places in Pekanbaru

represent certain ethnicities. The representation in terms of lexical and associative meaning does not solely imply the place of origin or ethnicity of the owner of the culinary industry; it associates the menu selections with ethnic and cultural aspects which characterise each restaurant. In addition, it is a form of building and developing the brand of the culinary industry itself.

In conformity with this research, it is expected to bring great benefits, theoretically and practically. The theoretical benefit is that it can classify the ethnic naming in the ethnolinguistic realm on the development of the culinary industry in Pekanbaru City. Regarding the practical benefits, it is expected that future researchers will be more mindful of the importance of names, especially in the culinary industry which is growing rapidly. However, this study is not without limitations. It generally analysed six ethnic restaurants in Pekanbaru and there were rooms for more many questions for further investigation. Future studies need to be conducted to establish ethnic restaurants with a more varied range of ethnicities in several regions using an ethnolinguistic approach.

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